2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

601

Aaš-toyon, husband's grandfather
Uol-toyon, husband's elder brother

Törüöt üs

The main, original clan; genealogical table; origins

Törüt

Clan; forefather; origin; beginning; root; base

Tüñür, Tügür, Tümür

Relative by marriage; matchmaker; groom's man; bride's maid

**Ubai*

Elder male by age; elder male in the family or clan (see *bï*)

Uol

Boy, youth; son (see *oho*)

Uolan

See *uol*; *uolan-jon*, young men

**Urū*

Relative by marriage; relative in general

Following this presentation of the complete list of Yakut terms of relationship, two points remain to be cleared up: first, the function of the Yakut *Je-usa* (mother's clan) as opposed to the *Aga-usa* (father's clan or gens); and second, the inference to be drawn from Yakut classificatory and descriptive terms of relationship. 614 601

The Yakut mother's clan is not connected with a family organization in which the women have the chief place in the government, or with the mythical race of women of Asia Minor called Amazons. The Yakut man is the real ruler and head of certain social groups. The origin of the term, *Je-usa*, may be explained, as Sieroszevski assumed, by the former existence of polygamy among the Yakut. The children of each wife—and there is no question that the children knew their own mothers—formed a *Je-usa*, but all these groups of mothers with their children were considered to be divisions of the *Aga-usa*, or the father's gens. 595 ● 614 601

Some writers, like Professor Kroeber, have objected to the usual distinctions between classificatory and descriptive relationship systems, but the study of the Yakut terms of relationship leads us to discriminate between classificatory and descriptive terms. Those terms which apply to lineal and collateral relations, consanguinity and affinity in one group, are classificatory terms; on the other hand, terms designating certain particular cases of consanguinity and affinity are descriptive. Classificatory terms are marked in the list by an asterisk. 601

In connection with the statement that the Yakut mother's clan is an integral part of the father's clan, we should like to present some data bearing on earlier matriarchal relations. The Yakut regard them- 614 601

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

601 614 selves as the offspring of the mythical Omogoi-bai, in spite of the fact that they originate from his daughter, who married a Tatar or a Buryat.

583 591 606 To the end of the eighteenth century, there remained in vogue among the Yakut the custom of concession of wives. Formerly the bridegroom lived permanently in the house of his father-in-law, but in more recent times he lived there only for a definite period.

The *kalym*, or bride-price, replaced the system of marriage by capture. The origin of the *kalym* may be seen in the simulated enmity of the mother-in-law and the son-in-law.

583 587 837 842 A matriarchal system presupposes looseness of sex relations. The chastity of girls in rich families is not a question of morality but of *kalym* The *kalym* for a widow or a girl who has had children is low. In the case of a widow, the belief in the right of the deceased husband may limit the number of wooers. A girl with a child, however, is sometimes preferred as a guaranty against barrenness which the Yakut dislike. In Yakut tales, the guest does not ask, "Where shall I sleep?", but, "Where do you put your guests?" and then they are shown to the beds of the girls. This is a form of hospitable hetaerism.

212 592 595 As the ancient Yakut had no written records, we know very little of their former life and particularly of their internal organization. Our information may be summarized in the following.

A household or yard was called *yal;* a group of individuals, who formed a family, as well as each member of the group, was called *körgön*. The family consisted of blood relatives as well as of relatives by marriage: sons-in-law, wives (polygamy), adopted children, laborers, and slaves of both sexes. When the Yakut polygamist had several wives, he had several *yals*.

567 592 601 888 At the head of the family was the *aga*, meaning primarily "elder in age" and then "father." All the people of the household were regarded as and called by him "my children," "my sons or my daughters." Among these were included not only his own children, but also all relatives by blood and marriage, by adoption, by purchase (slaves), and any other dependents, as war captives. The *aga* continued to rule as long as he preserved his physical and mental abilities. According to a Yakut tradition, aged parents and also sick and crippled people, unable to work, were doomed to die and were even buried alive after three days of abundant entertainment.

181 888 Trostchansky, who lived as a political exile among the Yakut for about twenty years, characterizes them as egoistical utilitarians.[1] He

[1] Trostchansky, V. F., Notes on the Yakut of the Yakutsk District (*Memoirs, Imperial Society for Archaeology, History, and Ethnography*, vol. 27, parts 2–4, Kasan, 1911, in Russian), 97.

6: Sauer--129 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 595

"Polygamy is allowed, and some have six wives; but the first is respected by all the rest; they dwell in separate huts; and in case of bad conduct they are returned home, and the greatest part of the kalim [RCH: bride-price] is given back. This, however, very seldom happens: I have not been able to hear of a single instance."

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 168 [2] G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 165, 583, 595, 854

"The marriage ceremony contains an exchange of gifts, the bridegroom brings kalym, the bride anna (dowry). When the Cossacks came, they found polygamy general, owing no doubt to the nomadic character of the people, the Yakut having a wife in every pasture; but this is not much practiced now, partly because the high price of the kalym is a deterrent, partly because girls die more frequently than boys in infancy, as they are not so carefully tended."

17: Erman--264 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 595, 583, 584

"At Delgeisk, an old Yakut told me many particulars respecting the present manners and customs of his people. 'Here in the neighbourhood of the Russians, every one contents himself with one wife; but, among the families of the northern tracts, polygamy is as prevalent as ever. The old custom is kept up in regard to what is called the kolŭim, or the sum for which every Yakut buys his wife. This is usually a number of cattle, to the value of 200 or 300 roobles; but as the family of the man are not always in a condition to pay the stipulated amount at once, it is customary to affiance the boys already in their twelfth year. The betrothed girls may be visited in their parents' yurts by their intended husbands, but cannot be taken home by the latter till the payment of the kolŭim is completed. The sum thus paid goes wholly to the father of the bride, who carries only a few presents with her to her new home. Matchmakers, male and female--the svàti and svàkhui of the Russians, are indispensable as witnesses in settling the price of the bride.'"

116, 114, 595, 61

At the present time, relationship within the limits of the iye-usa is traced through the male line, and M. Sieroszewski makes the extremely likely guess that the division of the paternal clan into several maternal clans is a natural consequence of the polygamy that was once practiced among the Yakuts. Monogamous marriage took a firm hold among the Yakuts only at the beginning of the 19th century. (2) The aga-ūsa included all the

2. V. Jochelson, see Zhivaîa Starina, 1895, II, 137.

descendants taking their descent from one father, while each īye-ūsa included only the issue of one of his wives. The supposition of M. Sieroszewski has a great deal of verisimilitude. [39] In reality, however, where polygamy leads to the above-mentioned division of the paternal clan into several maternal clans, it only plays the role of a factor supporting in life the reckoning of relationship through the female line, and not the reason which gave rise to it: only upon the basis of an already existing custom of reckoning relationship through the wife's line can the maternal clan arise, either as an independent organization, or as a sub-grouping of the paternal clan. Consequently, how ever the īye-ūsa may have arisen among the Yakuts, its existence must be in fact regarded as a proof that there once existed among the Yakuts the custom of determining relationship through the wife's line, the recollection of an epoch when the bonds uniting

child and father were not yet taken into account. The fact cited by M. Sieroszewski, that according to tradition many paternal clans (aga-ūsa) and even entire naslegi, took their designation from women, strengthens this supposition. The chief significance in the contemporary structure of the Yakuts, however, attaches to the aga-ūsa, the paternal clan.

over land), thereby sustaining the fiction of community of clan interests. 565
A poor kinsman used to call a toyon who had robbed him of his posses- 614
sions aga (father), and was expected to look upon him as his "benefactor."

Family Customs

The primary unit in the social structure of the Yakuts had long been 594
the family (kergen or yal), which consisted of husband, wife and children, sometimes with the inclusion of other relatives living in the same house. The married sons were usually regarded as a separate household. The [595]
family was monogamous, but not too long ago (at the beginning of the 19th century) polygamy also existed among the wealthier section of the population, although the number of wives did not usually exceed two or three. In such cases the wives lived apart, each one running a separate household; the Yakuts explained this custom as a convenient way of looking after the livestock, which were distributed among several wives.

Marriage was preceded, sometimes for a long interval, by matchmaking. 584
There were also traces of exogamy (known from the 17th-century docu- [582]
ments); until quite late, males tried to pick their wives from a different clan, while the richer people, not satisfied with this, sought their brides as far as possible in other naslegs or even other ulusy. Having selected the bride, the groom or his parents sent their relatives as matchmakers. The latter, using special ceremonies and conventional language, sought to obtain the consent of the future bride's parents to the marriage, and on the extent of the bride-price (khalyym; or suluu). The consent of the girl herself was not asked at all in the old days. The bride-price 583
consisted of livestock, but the extent of it varied considerably, from one or two to many dozen head; the bride-price always included the meat of a slaughtered beast. At the end of the 19th century there was a strong trend towards taking the bride payment in actual money. Some of the payment (kurum) was spent on the wedding feast (in the 17th-century documents, the word kurum sometimes meant the bride payment as a whole). The payment was considered compulsory, and a girl who married without it considered herself dishonored. The suitor was assisted by relatives, 584
sometimes even by distant kinsmen, in arranging the payment, thus showing the ancient view of a wedding as an all-clan affair. The relatives of the bride also took part in distributing the payment obtained. On his side, the suitor received a dowry (enn'e), partly in livestock and meat, but more often in clothing and utensils; the value of the dowry averaged half the value of the bride-price.

The clan also played an important part in the actual wedding ceremony, 585
which was attended by a large number of guests, relatives of the bride and groom, neighbors and so on. The festivities lasted several days and consisted of extensive feasting, different rituals and amusements, games, dancing, and so on. Not only did the bride and groom refrain from occupying the central place in all this festivity, they hardly took part at all.

In similar fashion to the wedding ceremony, the kinship terminology 601
has also retained traces of the earlier forms of marriage. The name for the son—uol—actually means boy or youth; the word for daughter—kyys—means girl or little girl; father is *aga* (literally, "older"); wife is oyokh, but in some places the wife is simply called d'akhtar (woman), emeekhsin ("old woman") and so on; the husband is er, the older brother is ubay (bii), the younger brother is ini; the elder sister is ed'iy (agas) and the younger sister is balys. The last four terms are also used to denote uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, and other relatives. Generally speaking,